

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated January 26, 2005 (U.S. Patent Office Paper No. 20050121). In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

As outlined above, Claims 2, 4, 6, 9, 11 and 13 through 15 are presently pending in this application. Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 12 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Further, Claims 2, 9, 13, 14 and 15 are being amended to correct formal errors and to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject invention, with Claims 2, 9, 13 and 14 being rewritten in independent form. Entry of the amendments to Claims 2, 9, 13, 14 and 15 is respectfully requested.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1, 5, 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,484,209 to Momirov, hereinafter referred to as the Momirov '209 patent, in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,052,373 to Lau, hereinafter referred to as the Lau '373 patent.

Claims 3, 10 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the Momirov '209 patent in view of the Lau '373 patent, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,728,238 to Long et al., hereinafter referred to as the Long '238 patent.

In response, to the above rejections of Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 12 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Further, the Office Action dated January 26, 2005 (U.S. Patent Office Paper No. 20050121, page 6) stated that Claims 2, 4, 6, 9, 11 and 13 through 15 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the recitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In this regard, Claims 2, 9, 13 and 14 have been rewritten in independent form, with Claim 2 including the recitations of Claim 1, Claim 9 including the recitations of Claim 8, Claim 13 including the recitations of Claim 12 and Claim 14 including the recitations of Claim 12. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that new independent Claims 2, 9, 13 and 14

are in condition for allowance. Also, it is respectfully submitted that dependent Claims 4 and 6 which depend from independent Claim 2, dependent Claim 11 which depends from independent Claim 9, and dependent Claim 15 which depends from independent Claim 13 are in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the rejections of Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

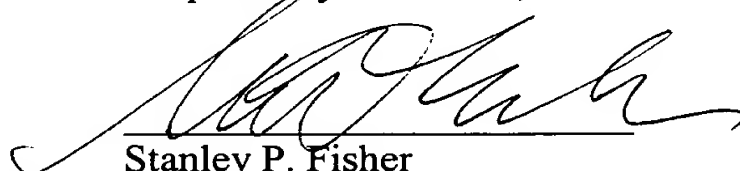
Reconsideration and allowance of Claims 2, 4, 6, 9, 11 and 13 through 15 are respectfully requested.

In view of all the above, Applicants respectfully submit that certain clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art references upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely. These differences are more than sufficient that the present invention as now claimed would not have been anticipated nor rendered obvious given the prior art. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Conclusion

Favorable reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the address and telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



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